



Week 3: January 23-25, 2024



The SCEA members Liz Humphrey and Ashley Thurman at the White House

Elizabeth Humphrey and Ashley Thurman White House Visit

Earlier this month, The SCEA members Elizabeth Humphrey and Ashley Thurman were invited to the White House for a “Know Your Value” event with First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and MSNBC’s Mika Brzezinski. Liz was recognized for her passion and dedication to mentoring students in Orangeburg County School District, where she works as an instructional coach at Robert E. Howard Middle School and was a District Teacher of the Year. Her work was highlighted by NEA over the summer.

Ashley is a member leader from Orangeburg.

You can read more about their trip to the White House [here](#). You can learn more and watch clips from the event [here](#).



State Board of Education Regulation 43-170

Last fall, the State Board of Education (SBE) released a proposed change to the regulations regarding selection of instructional materials.

As a reminder, this proposed regulation establishes two main guidelines for instructional materials:

- Age and developmentally appropriate: materials must be "suitable to particular age groups...based on developing cognitive, and behavioral capacity typical for the age group." The proposal also states that a material is not age appropriate if it contains visual depictions or descriptions of "sexual conduct" as defined in state statute or if it is considered "indecent" or "obscene" under the broadcast guidelines for the Federal Communications Commission.
- Educationally suitable: the material must be aligned with the "instructional program of the school and district," which means it must be connected to the standards laid out in the Profile of a South Carolina Graduate.

As it currently stands, this regulation would ban classic works of literature such as Romeo and Juliet, The Odyssey, The Scarlet Letter, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, and others.

A public hearing will be held on this regulation at 1 p.m. on Feb. 13 at the Rutledge Conference Center in Columbia.

The deadline to submit written comment was this past Monday, Jan. 22. You can read the letter sent by The SCEA [here](#).

Thank you to everyone who sent an email!

S.305: Work Experience for New Teachers

For individuals seeking an initial educator certificate, the Senate has proposed counting prior relevant work experience towards certification and to allow

educators to start on a higher salary step. If passed, [S.305](#) would allow individuals with at least five years of relevant experience, within ten years prior to seeking the certificate, to count those years towards a higher salary step.

The Senate scheduled this bill for special order on Tuesday, where they passed several clarifying amendments. One of these amendments specifies that the bill only considers years of relevant work experience for salary schedule advancement.

Another amendment clarifies that educators who entered the profession prior to July 1, 2023, may request to have relevant work experience considered for purposes of advancing on the salary schedule during the current year only.

This means that current educators would not receive retroactive pay for increased years of experience.

You can read the amendments [here](#).

The bill was passed unanimously and will now go to the House.

The SCEA feels that this could help recruit and retain educators. Please send feedback on this bill to President Sherry East, seast@thescea.org.

S.905: Read to Succeed

On Tuesday, The Senate Education Committee had a hearing on [S.905](#), which would eliminate Read to Succeed requirements for educators who are not directly involved in teaching early literacy. It also directs educators to use the “Science of Reading” approach to teach literacy and reading, requires that third graders who cannot demonstrate reading proficiency be held back, and extends summer reading camps so they start earlier than third grade.

This bill is very similar to S.418, which was introduced last year but did not make it through the legislative process.

No action was taken by the committee this week. There is another hearing on this bill next Wednesday, January 31. Please send feedback on this bill to President Sherry East, seast@thescea.org.

H.3309: Seizure Safe Schools Act

The House began debate on [H.3309](#), the “Seizure Safe Schools Act” on Thursday, but did not take a vote. This bill would require public schools to create seizure response plans that include training for educators so that they know how to recognize signs and symptoms of seizures, an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for situations when a student has a seizure, and allow parents to give permission for students with epilepsy to self-administer medication as necessary.

Debate will continue on this bill next week. Please send feedback on this bill to President Sherry East at seast@thescea.org.

Governor's State of the State Address

On Wednesday, Governor Henry McMaster gave his State of the State Address to the General Assembly. In the speech, he discussed South Carolina's economic growth and touted the businesses that are investing in the state, the record growth of our tourism economy, and a surplus in the state budget.

Gov. McMaster outlined his budget priorities, including increased funding for environmental conservation, increased funding for 4k, funding vouchers, and raising the starting salary for educators to \$50,000 by 2026.

Governor McMaster also attacked labor unions, claiming that they pose a "clear and present danger" to our state's economic success. The Governor claimed that his administration would "fight [labor unions], all the way to the gates of hell. And we will win."

You can [watch his full speech here](#). A written transcript is available [here](#).

Democratic Representative Roger Kirby delivered the response to the State of the State, where he criticized Gov. McMaster for failing to address South Carolina's low national rankings in healthcare and education and criticized the former Comptroller's mishandling of \$3.5 billion of state money.

You can read Rep. Kirby's full remarks [here](#).

Education Bills That Moved This Week

[HB3309: SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS ACT](#) (Gilliam, L)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "SEIZURE SAFE SCHOOLS ACT" BY ADDING SECTION 59-63-97 SO AS TO REQUIRE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SEIZURE ACTION PLANS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCH PLANS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

- 1/25/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Caskey

[HB4623: EXCUSED SCHOOL ABSENCES](#) (Haddon, P)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-1-462 SO AS TO EXCUSE ABSENCES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS WHEN PARTICIPATING IN CERTAIN WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES INCLUDING ORGANIZED COMPETITIONS OR EXHIBITIONS OF FFA ORGANIZATIONS OR 4-H PROGRAMS, AND TO PROVIDE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING AND COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS MISSED DURING SUCH EXCUSED ABSENCES.

- 1/25/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Forrest

HB4649: PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS (Bannister, B)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 59-19-275 SO AS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH MORE THAN FIFTEEN THOUSAND STUDENTS MAY USE CERTAIN SECURITY PERSONNEL TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND SECURITY ON SCHOOL PREMISES IF LICENSED AS A PROPRIETARY SECURITY BUSINESS, AND TO PROVIDE DISTRICTS REMAIN OBLIGATED TO USE SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS AS OTHERWISE PROVIDED BY LAW; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-18-60, RELATING TO PROPRIETARY SECURITY BUSINESS LICENSURE, SO AS TO ADD PROVISIONS CONCERNING PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS APPLYING FOR LICENSURE; BY AMENDING SECTION 40-18-80, RELATING TO SECURITY OFFICER REGISTRATION CERTIFICATION, SO AS TO PROVIDE THE SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION SHALL IMPLEMENT CERTAIN RELATED TRAINING REQUIREMENTS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 40-18-140, RELATING TO EXCEPTIONS FROM PRIVATE SECURITY AND INVESTIGATION AGENCY LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS, SO AS TO CLARIFY THAT PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE EXCLUDED FROM THESE REQUIREMENTS.

- 1/25/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Elliott

HB4689: CHILDREN'S DEVICE PROTECTION ACT (Johnson, K)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ENACTING THE "CHILDREN'S DEVICE PROTECTION ACT" BY ADDING ARTICLE 3 TO CHAPTER 1, TITLE 63 SO AS TO REQUIRE SMARTPHONES AND TABLETS TO CONTAIN CERTAIN FILTERS AND OTHER FEATURES TO PREVENT MINORS FROM ACCESSING OBSCENE MATERIALS THROUGH THE INTERNET; TO CREATE CIVIL AND CRIMINAL LIABILITY FOR MANUFACTURERS OF THESE DEVICES FOR CERTAIN VIOLATIONS OF THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ARTICLE, WITH EXCEPTIONS, AND TO AUTHORIZE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND SOLICITORS TO BRING ACTIONS TO ENFORCE THE PROVISIONS OF THE ARTICLE; TO CREATE A PRIVATE CAUSE OF ACTION FOR PARENTS OR LEGAL GUARDIANS OF MINORS IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES AND TO ESTABLISH DAMAGES THAT MAY BE RECOVERED; AND TO DESIGNATE SECTIONS 63-1-10 THROUGH 63-1-50 AS ARTICLE 1, ENTITLED "STATE POLICY AND GENERAL PROVISIONS"; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 16-17-490, RELATING TO THE CRIME OF CONTRIBUTING TO THE DELINQUENCY OF A MINOR, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

- 1/25/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Hyde

HB4697: INCOME TAX DEDUCTION (Kilmartin, J)

A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING SECTION 12-6-1172 SO AS TO EXEMPT THE RETIREMENT INCOME OF FIRST RESPONDERS, LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, AND TEACHERS; AND BY AMENDING SECTION 12-6-1170, RELATING TO RETIREMENT INCOME DEDUCTION, SO AS TO MAKE CONFORMING CHANGES.

- 1/25/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Landing, Bustos, McGinnis, Hardee

[HB4700: SOUTH CAROLINA SOCIAL MEDIA REGULATION ACT](#) (Newton, W)
A BILL TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY ADDING ARTICLE 9 TO CHAPTER 5, TITLE 39 SO AS TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS; TO PROVIDE THAT A SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY MAY NOT PERMIT CERTAIN MINORS TO BE ACCOUNT HOLDERS; TO PROVIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANIES; TO PROVIDE THAT A SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY SHALL PROVIDE CERTAIN PARENTS OR GUARDIANS WITH CERTAIN INFORMATION; TO PROVIDE THAT A SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY SHALL RESTRICT SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESS TO MINORS DURING CERTAIN HOURS; TO PROVIDE FOR CONSUMER COMPLAINTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION HAS AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER AND ENFORCE CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS; TO PROVIDE FOR AN ANNUAL REPORT; TO PROVIDE FOR A CAUSE OF ACTION; AND TO PROVIDE THAT CERTAIN WAIVERS AND LIMITATIONS ARE VOID.

- 1/25/2024 - Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Bradley, Mitchell, Yow, Hiott, Erickson, Hager, Wheeler, Weeks, Ballentine, Wooten, Calhoon

Upcoming Meetings of Interest

Below are meetings scheduled for next week on bills of interest to you. You can click on the date link to view the agenda and the bill number to see the legislation.

[Wed 1/31 10:00 AM in Gressette Room 209](#)
[S 905](#) (Read to Succeed)

Introductions of Interest

Below are bills that were introduced that may be of interest to you. We have provided a brief description as well as a link to the full text of each bill. Please review and let us know if you have any comments or concerns.

[H. 4918: Urging Congress to Extend Summer EBT Program Deadline](#)
Ott

Representative Russell Ott (D-Calhoun) and others introduced a House resolution to urge Congress to extend the deadline for the Notice of Intent for the 2024 Summer Electronic Benefit and Transfer Program for Children.

- This resolution was referred to the House Invitations and Memorial Resolutions Committee.

H. 4930: Summer EBT Program Notice of Intent

Jones

Representatives Wendell Jones (D-Greenville), Marvin Pendarvis (D-Charleston), Chandra Dillard (D-Greenville), Jermaine Johnson (D-Richland), Pat Henegan (D-Marlboro), Carl Anderson (D-Georgetown), Russell Ott (D-Calhoun), Roger Kirby (D-Florence), Wendell Gilliard (D-Charleston), Leon Howard (D-Richland), David Weeks (D-Sumter), and Will Wheeler (D-Lee) introduced a joint resolution to require the Governor and the Director of the Department of Social Services to file a Notice of Intent with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children within five days after the effective date.

- This joint resolution was referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

H. 4934: Paid Military Leave

Mitchell

Representatives Cody Mitchell (R-Darlington), Doug Gilliam (R-Union), Jordan Pace (R-Berkeley), Richie Yow (R-Chesterfield), Chris Murphy (R-Dorchester), Brandon Guffey (R-York), Tommy Pope (R-York), and Bill Sandifer (R-Oconee) introduced legislation to provide that school district employees that are enlisted or commissioned members of the military are entitled to 45 days of paid military leave each year.

- This bill was referred to the House Medical, Military, Public and Municipal Affairs Committee.

S. 987: Summer EBT Program Notice of Intent

Fanning

Senators Mike Fanning (D-Fairfield), Deon Tedder (D-Charleston), Kevin Johnson (D-Clarendon), Margie Matthews (D-Colleton), Mia McLeod (I-Richland), Tameika Devine (D-Richland), Brad Hutto (D-Orangeburg), Ronnie Sabb (D-Williamsburg), and Vernon Stephens (D-Orangeburg) introduced a joint resolution to require the Governor and the Director of the Department of Social Services to file a Notice of Intent with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program for Children within five days after the effective date.

- This joint resolution was referred to the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

S. 991: Urging Congress to Extend or Waive Summer EBT Program Deadline

Tedder

Senator Deon Tedder (D-Charleston), Mia McLeod (I-Richland), Thomas McElveen (D-Sumter), and Nikki Setzler (D-Lexington) introduced legislation to urge Congress to either extend the deadline for the Notice of Intent for the 2024 Summer EBT Program or waive the deadline to permit states to submit a Notice of Intent after January 1, 2024.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee.

H. 4944: Charter Schools

Felder

Representatives Raye Felder (R-York) and Bill Taylor (R-Aiken) introduced legislation to allow a charter school to voluntarily terminate its charter by submitting a written resolution from its board of directors to its sponsor and revise

provisions concerning the sponsorship, oversight, governance, and operation of charter schools.

- This bill was referred to the House Education and Public Works Committee.

[H. 4946: Urging Congress to Extend or Waive Summer EBT Program Deadline](#)

Pendarvis

Representative Marvin Pendarvis (D-Charleston) introduced a House resolution to urge Congress to either extend the deadline for the Notice of Intent for the 2024 Summer EBT Program or waive the deadline to permit states to submit a Notice of Intent after January 1, 2024.

- This resolution was referred to the House Invitations and Memorial Resolutions Committee.

[H. 4952: Lexington County School Districts, Partisan Elections](#)

Kilmartin

Representatives Jay Kilmartin (R-Lexington), Donald McCabe (R-Lexington), Joe White (R-Newberry), R.J. May (R-Lexington), Thomas Beach (R-Anderson), Mike Burns (R-Greenville), Brandon Guffey (R-York), April Cromer (R-Anderson), and Melissa Oremus (R-Aiken) introduced legislation to require the election of school trustees in Lexington County School Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 be on a partisan basis beginning in 2026.

- This bill was referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

Elections and Voter Registration Information

There are two Presidential Primaries happening in February:

- The first is the Democratic Presidential Primary that is **next Saturday, February 3**. The voter registration deadline for that election was on Thursday, January 4.
- The second is the Republican Presidential Primary on Saturday, February 24. The voter registration deadline for that election was on Thursday, January 25.

Additionally, 17-year-olds who will be 18 by the time of the election are allowed to pre-register to vote. In order to vote in an election, you must be registered to vote at least 30 days prior to the election.

You can check your voter registration and find more election information at the button below.

[Click Here for Important Election Information](#)

